

In the abstract:

Please amend the abstract as follows:

Q1 [A m]Method and apparatus for implementing group calling [is] are disclosed. In one embodiment, the method includes displaying a service provider, a service provider rate for communicating with the service provider, and a real-time indication of whether the service provider is available. The method may further include[s] receiving a request from a first customer to communicate with the service provider and connecting the first customer to the service provider through a link capable of transmitting from the service provider to the first customer. The method may also further include[s] receiving a request from a second customer to communicate with the service provider and connecting the second customer to the service provider through a link capable of transmitting from the service provider to the second customer while the first customer is coupled to the service provider. [The method also includes billing the first customer automatically based on the time during which the link to the first customer is maintained; and billing the second customer automatically based on the time during which the link to the second customer is maintained. The method may further include connecting the service provider to a plurality of customers.]

[In an alternative embodiment, a system may include logic blocks suitable for performing the method described above or for otherwise implementing a system for connecting a plurality of customers to a service provider. Furthermore, such a system may be suitable for interaction with a moderator and/or an intermediary. Moreover, such a system may include a communications interface and a controller computer.]